231 Old cows which have stopped producing are usually killed and their meat exchanged for millet or maize which in turn [437] is bartered for new young heifers, bulls, goats or sheep, or if necessary used for consumption. The same applies to oxen 764 although these are usually exchanged directly for other stock. A heifer is usually worth two bulls or young oxen. The special oxen used by their owners as companions when they attend funeral mournings are seldom exchanged, but are slaughtered when they get old, the owners preparing special feasts as a tribute to their past service. A young man who has ridden a special ox at funeral dances does not eat the meat when the ox dies as a result of disease or accident. These "companions" are usually honoured by having bells fixed on special leather straps fastened around their necks. Some he-goats are also so honoured. The ringing of these bells will sometimes stop hyenas from entering the kraal and may help in tracing animals when grazing in bushy country. The ears of the owners are usually sensitive to the sound of the bells of their own oxen.

231 The Luo do not like polled cattle because some of them believe that such animals are unlucky. They say that if a [842] polled animal is paid as part of a dowry the woman is likely to be sterile. They are very fond of oxen with long horns or those with peculiarly or funnily placed horns. During drinking parties the owners of such oxen "show off" by placing their arms in different positions to demonstrate the directions of the [556] horns of their oxen. This performance is a sign of wealth because the average man does not possess a number of oxen with abnormally-placed horns. Long-horned cows are not of special value. The horns of dangerous animals are cut so as to reduce the risk of people and young animals being horned.

Beautifying animals by branding which is practised by some African tribes is not favoured by the Luo. The only method that is used to increase the natural beauty of cattle, especially bull calves, is to trim the ears. Trimming is, however, [232] also done as a treatment for east coast fever because in this disease the animal appears dull and heavy as if suffering from headache, and the Luo believe that by letting a little blood from the ear the headache is eased.

231 Luo cattle-owners do not usually go in for special colours, but there are some colours which are considered objectionable. 822 Pure white is not liked because white animals are usually susceptible to skin diseases, accidental skin lesions and to marking by tick-bites which usually remain permanently conspicuous. Another objectionable colour is striped, dark, dull-brown. Animals with these mixed colours are not accepted for dowry because the disagreeable colours may cause disagreement during the arrangement of the marriage or between the wife and her husband. Brown is unanimously favoured because it is considered resistant to skin diseases and accidental injuries.

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762 553 was given his name reveals their attempt to avoid the consequences of his act.

762 159 684 The second case arises from a breach of customary law which in the old days would have meant banishment but which today brings social ostracism.

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Suicide Case No. 2.

The suicide was caught in the act of intercourse with his full brother's wife. The Luo believe that such an act involving members of the same *Jokamio* (that is, those descended from the same mother or grandmother) brings *chira* to the whole clan. The security and solidarity of family relationships are [578] threatened by the act because it involves quarrels which may lead to violence within the primary segment of the clan. In this case the brother did not tell the elders of the clan but merely threatened to do so. The guilty man returned to his own homestead and hanged himself in his hut. The house was destroyed [783] and members of the extended family were cleansed by the *jobilo*. The cleansing ceremony took the same form as in the first case, with the addition that the village was sprinkled with medicine in order that it might continue to be used by the dead man's family.

In the next case there are two clear motives which led to the suicide. The first, perhaps the most important, lies in indigenous beliefs and attitudes, while the second lies in more modern attitudes.

Suicide Case No. 3.

159 762 556 [661] This Luo was about 30 years old and had been employed as a driver for the Government for many years. Drivers in Kenya receive a relatively high salary, and in addition some take advantage of their position and make extra money by illegally charging people for transportation. Through these activities, he became a relatively rich man and was able to marry a total of five wives at his comparatively young age. He was also wealthy

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in cattle, and had a permanent modern house at his homestead where four of his wives cultivated large gardens. His fifth wife lived with him at his place of employment. At the time of his suicide he was in the process of marrying a sixth wife when, during one of the marriage ceremonies at her village, a brother of the bride objected to her becoming his wife. He charged that the man had already too many wives and could not look after them. As proof, he offered the evidence that his most recent wife, the fifth one, was no more than a prostitute and that he, himself, had used her on several occasions. This caused a fight in the village and quarrels which led to the exchange of many curses between the two groups, and therefore the wedding could never take place. The driver returned to his homestead to confront the wife named in the incident with the accusation and, in typical Luo fashion, she calmly admitted her guilt, chiding him to do something about it. He beat her severely and she ran from her house and spent the night in the bush. He brooded all night on what had happened and on the shame his wife had brought him. Moreover, he knew that he was shortly to be accused of fraudulent conversion of funds by the Government and would lose his job, if he did not end up in prison: neither of which were considered really serious. However, in his emotional state, these must be considered as contributory causes. He could see his whole world collapsing around him.

The next morning he sent his servant, a young lad, to the butcher's shop for meat in order to get him out of the way. He then hanged himself from the ceiling of his hut.

My Luo informants state with confidence that the prime cause of this suicide was the behavior of his wife, which had brought shame to a proud and successful man, so that he could no longer face his friends. The fact that the Government was interested in recovering a large sum of money which he was alleged to have used for his own purposes is, in my opinion however, a contributory factor.

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propriate prestige of beer parties and entertainment of his father's friends. On the day of the suicide, a group of the father's friends arrived at the village and the father asked his son's wife to prepare food and drink for them. This she refused to do, so that night he burned himself in his house, which the Luo believe brought ruin to the lineage and particularly to his son.

The next case is an interesting one because it illustrates an inherent Luo trait: the profound jealousy of anyone who is successful.

Suicide Case No. 9.

The man who died was the brother of the suicide in case number 2, and took the latter's wives as leviratic wives. He also inherited his gardens. Shortly after this, he began to prosper phenomenally. The elders state that his cattle produced mostly heifers and some produced twin heifers. His crops were better than his neighbors, so they began soon to suspect him of witchcraft. In the space of a few years as his prosperity increased, he was more and more ostracized from the activities of the community. The final blow came when his own *likumbe*, minimal lineage group, denied him entrance to a lineage sacrifice on the grounds that he was a witch. *Ten years after his brother's suicide*, almost to a day, he hanged himself.

When the elders were questioned as to whether or not this man was a witch, they replied that he could not possibly have been a witch, because he had committed suicide. If he were a witch, his medicine would have been so powerful that the effect of being ostracized by the community would not have bothered him at all, let alone driven him to suicide.

The Luo believe that those most likely to commit suicide are those who have descended from a lineage in which there has been a history of suicide. Case number 2 was the brother of case number 9, and case number 5 the son of case number

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her with canes. She never returned to the district. In time Okech was forgiven and returned to his homestead. He never remarried, but now lives with two leviratic wives.

Suicide Case No. 19.

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This suicide was the junior wife of a very wealthy man. Although he was wealthy, he did not provide the modern luxuries for his wives which are now becoming customary and which carry high status among women. This woman decided that she would take matters into her own hands and killed a goat belonging to herself in order to sell the meat at the market to get money and millet, so that she could get the things that she desired. When her co-wives saw what she had done, they took part of the millet and some of the money. The woman appealed to her husband, but he sided with his other wives. That evening she went into the bush near the village and hanged herself.

Suicide Case No. 20.

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This woman was the second wife (*nyachieu*) of a wealthy man who preferred his first and third wives to her. This preferential treatment gave them courage to abuse her often and to show her that they were the only wives of the husband. On one occasion, when she was quarrelling with the husband, the other two wives joined in and beat her and abused her. The husband looked on in amusement. Shortly after, he took hold of her son and began to curse him, saying that he was as bad as his mother. His mother tried to interfere, but was prevented from doing so by her co-wives, who continued to beat her. As soon as it got dark that night, she disappeared. Her son had run away to her mother's home. The people from the village and her relatives searched for her for three days, and at the end of the third day, her people began to mourn as if she were dead. The head of a goat was buried in front of her house to represent her body, for they were certain that she was dead and her body devoured by wild animals.